



SAFETY ALERT

**17th Coast Guard District
United States Coast Guard
P. O. Box 25517
Juneau, Alaska 99802**

CALL FOR A FREE DOCKSIDE EXAM

MSO Anchorage	271-6725	MSD Sitka	966-5454
MSO Valdez	835-7223	MSD Ketchikan	225-4496
MSO Juneau	463-2448	MSD Kodiak	486-5918
MSD Dutch Harbor	581-3466	MSD Kenai	283-3292

WATERTIGHT DOORS and HATCHES

One of the most common maintenance discrepancies noted during Coast Guard examinations of fishing vessels in Alaska is improperly maintained or inoperable watertight closure. Maintaining a vessels watertight integrity is one of the most important aspects of any operation at sea.

Crews on fishing vessels should make proper closure of watertight doors (WTD's) and fittings part of their drills and instructions.

WTD's should be closed when in transit, especially during inclement weather. The only time WTD's should remain open is when personnel need to move about the vessel due to work, or when the vessel is in port made fast to the pier.

Watertight doors and fittings will retain their efficiency longer if they are maintained and operated properly. To close a door, first set the dogs opposite the hinges, with just enough pressure to keep the door closed. Then set all the other dogs evenly to obtain uniform bearing all around. To open a door, start with the dogs nearest the hinges. This will keep the door from springing and make it easier to operate the remaining dogs. Dogs require maintenance and need to be greased regularly. Make it a part of the vessels regular maintenance schedule. Any frozen, missing or loose dogs should be replaced or repaired.

Rubber gaskets are secured to the covering part of the WTD or hatch to close against a fixed position knife-edge. Gaskets are usually pressed into a groove or secured with retaining strips held in place with screws or bolts.



Poorly maintained dog that needs to be taken apart, cleaned and greased. NOTE fitting for periodic greasing.

Gaskets should be periodically examined for cracks, missing sections, tears or anything else that would prevent a good seal. Gaskets should always be kept free of paint. Missing, worn or painted gaskets should be replaced.



Painted and cracked gasket.

The Gasket must have a clean, bright (unpainted) smooth knife-edge to press against. A well-fitted WTD with new gaskets will still leak if the knife-edge is not properly maintained.



Knife-edge covered with paint and rust.

